“Fifteen Minutes of Glory!”

screamed Commander, and the men repeated it in a crescendo shaking the very stones. Then the quiet descended like a hammer.

Second then spoke. “I’m sorry the ammunition will run out fifteen minutes after their attack begins tomorrow—spy claims eight sharp. Unfortunately, our enemies won the despicable arms auction. At any rate, my responsibility and I failed.”

Some of the men yelled NO! but others just stared. Second was nowhere as popular. Swagger deficit. “Retreat is for pussies!” soon grew among them, and fizzled.

“Let me make up a little by getting the largest order McDonald’s has even seen!” Everyone cheered and hoo-hahed. “I’ll take the virgin along for the heavy lifting.” They laughed at the reference to their most junior.

...

“Well young man, fifteen minutes of glory?”

“I’ll do my duty!”

“But your sad face says ‘I’m seventeen!’ My God to be seventeen!”

“Sir! You just passed McDonald’s!”

“Live and learn.”